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# INSIDE OCS

## Office Communications Systems Program

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of the first newsletter may be obtained from

Information Services  
Department of Communications  
300 Slater Street, 19th Floor  
Journal Tower North, Ottawa  
K1A 0C8

### STRATING TOMATED

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**Representatives from the four federal departments participating in the OCS field trials, try out equipment in the new Environment Canada demonstration room. Sitting: Jim Commins, Revenue Canada; standing (from left to right): Mike Magar, Environment Canada; John Macko, Department of National Defence; and Vivian Pettis, Energy, Mines and Resources.**

The emphasis is already changing from a demonstration centre to an information point. It is being used increasingly by people who have already come to see the equipment and the audio-visual presentation, or who are experienced in automation and who now have questions about types of equipment and their suitability for particular office needs.

The units of equipment and furniture on loan are constantly changing, but the types remain generally the same. There is a micro-computer, a small business computer for

three terminals, terminals hooked to a mini-computer for library use, a personal computer for use with cablevision, a terminal for the ergonomic furniture. Literature is available from various manufacturers.

Those wishing to arrange a tour of the centre are invited to make an appointment by phoning Suzanne Lanthier at (613) 994-2502.

Canada





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# INSIDE OCS

## Office Communications Systems Program

This is the second newsletter about the activities of the Office Communications Systems (OCS) program.

The planning and organization of the field trials listed in the first issue is now largely complete, and they are moving into the operational phase. Contracts have been let for evaluation.

### DEMONSTRATING THE AUTOMATED OFFICE

For people in the Department of the Environment the Office of the Future is no longer just an abstract idea. They can see it on the ground floor of the Vincent Massey Building on Hull's Boulevard St-Joseph.

The demonstration room began to evolve in the minds of departmental planners about three years ago. With increasing involvement in office communications systems, they wanted to be able to explain to staff what they might be getting into. Assistant Deputy Minister, Evan Armstrong had the idea of converting about a hundred square metres of unused lobby space into a demonstration centre. Using equipment and furniture willingly lent by manufacturers and distributors, they are able to show not only what the new systems will do, but what a workstation looks and feels like. A small board room is equipped to give audio-visual presentations.

"By giving people hands-on experience we can help alleviate people's fears," explains John Smith-Windsor, Computer Science Co-ordinator. "It is not only for operating staff, managers who do not have time to attend trade shows can keep up-to-date here."

The purpose of the room is not to instill enthusiasm for the wave of the future, but to give people a realistic idea of what the automated office is all about. Sometimes it is a matter of dampening undue expectations.

The demonstration room is best adapted to groups of four or five who are briefed by Manager, Suzanne Lanthier and her assistant Gilles Lemire. Since the centre opened in May there have been about 75 demonstrations. Most of the 300 or so visitors are Department of Environment staff who have had some exposure to office automation, but visitors from outside the department are also welcome to make appointments for tours.

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# IMPACT ASSESSMENT

The new technologies being introduced in the OCS field trials will find wide application in both government and private industry. However, the impact of this technology has yet to be evaluated. The OCS program has developed a comprehensive, standard approach to impact assessment and is using this approach to monitor the current field trials. Several contracts have been awarded to private sector evaluation contractors to help carry out this assessment.

A contract was let in April to Socioscope of Ottawa for \$40,000. Their work in Energy, Mines and Resources is expected to be finished by the end of 1983.

Three contracts totalling \$450,000 have now been awarded:

Wescom Communications Studies and Research Limited, Vancouver; Department of the Environment.

Engel and Townsend, Toronto; Department of National Revenue — Customs and Excise

Trigon Systems Group Inc., Toronto; Department of National Defence

Impact Assessment is under the Direction of Dr. Ted Grusec of the Department of Communications. He supervises the contracts and is responsible for the final co-ordinated report to be presented to the government, probably in mid-1985.

The thorough and detailed reports which will be prepared by the contractors are expected to remain confidential because of the detailed personal and commercial information they will contain. To ensure the field trials are of maximum benefit to industry and to all potential users there will be a comprehensive public report which follows normal guidelines respecting privacy.

The impact assessment has far-reaching importance to the Office of the Future. It is not a project audit. It is concerned primarily with the effect of the automated office on people and their organization. Productivity is a key word, and into it are woven innumerable factors relating to human responses and behaviour.

Impact assessment will therefore use all the instruments of the behavioural and social sciences to examine every aspect of the trials. Review starts at the beginning of the trials with the analysis of needs, the means chosen to meet them, the training of people to handle the new tools, the general understanding of the automated office, managerial attitudes towards the implications of organizational change, stress, organizational effects.

That is only part of the work. How often was the new system used? How did equipment meet the limitations of the human body, from glare to seat design? Did the trials meet the expectations of managers

and operators of the workstations? Did the new system really help decision-making? What inefficiencies did it eliminate? Did it create new inefficiencies? Are there effects of the automated office on careers and jobs? Does it affect physical and mental health and morale? What are the views of the unions? Above all, does the automated office help people do things better, and at what cost?

No answers are taken for granted; finding them will need much time and hard work, not only at the field trial sites but in research into the growing literature. The important point is not only that the questions are being asked, but that they are being raised at the early operations stage of each trial. That gives the opportunity for an examination in depth as each project unfolds.

The importance of the trials to Canada's Office of the Future is reflected in the effort put into the assessment now beginning.

## RECENTLY PUBLISHED STUDIES

Copies or information about these studies can be obtained from the Office Communications Systems Program office at (613) 996-0727.

- **User Interface Components for Office Communications Systems**  
by Dr. T. Carey — Guelph University  
Intended for software designers who will be developing user interfaces for office systems.
- **Study to Develop an Economic Model of Office Automation**  
by Mary Kirby and Roger Hough  
A description of the development of an economic revenue/cost model of office activities in the Canadian economy.
- **Office Automation Analysis Strategy**  
by CECIT and Hickling-Partners Inc.  
This document presents a strategy for identifying automation potential in a wide variety of offices.
- **Literature Review Office Automation Systems Models and Methodology**  
by CECIT and Hickling-Partners Inc.  
The intent of this document is to provide in a single source references to current literature on office systems analysis.
- **Survey of University Research Activities in Office Automation**  
by Roger Kaye  
The purpose of this report was to identify groups and individual professors who are active or intend to become active in fields closely related to office automation.

• **Field Trial Evaluation Guidelines**  
by Trigon Systems Group Inc.  
This publication is intended to help Canadian suppliers and potential users take advantage of the far-reaching new opportunities in office systems.

• **Office Communications Systems and Services**  
by Evert Communications Ltd.  
This directory is a vital tool in stimulating industrial participation and user awareness of "made in Canada" products and services.

• **The Electronic Office in Canada**  
by OCS Program  
The Office Communications Systems Program is a federal industrial initiative administered by the Department of Communications, with the support of the Department of Industry, Trade and Commerce.

## PLANNED STUDIES

- **Social Issues Arising from Office Automation**  
by T. Plowright and P. Booth
- **Human Factors Guidelines for Designing Office Systems Manuals**  
by J. Tombaugh and D. Dillon
- **Forecast of Federal Government Market for Office Automation Equipment and Services**  
by DPA Consulting Ltd.  
The purpose of this project is to develop a market forecast for office automation equipment and communications services in the federal government.
- **Independent Microhardware Industry Software Strategies for Office Automation**  
by Officesmiths Inc.
- **A Case Study in Managing Technology Transitions**  
by T. Grosec
- **Field Trial Participants**  
Field trial guidelines for user departments

# OCS

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# PARIS CLIPANTS AUX ProjETS PILOTES DU PROGRAMME DE LA BUREAUTIQUE



Les personnes qui désirent organiser une visite du centre sont priées de communiquer avec Mme Suzanne Lanthier au 994-2502.

bibliothèque, un ordinateur individuel devant servir en régime de télédistribution et un fabriquants offre un autre un vase événail de documents.

La salle est déjà en voie de devenir un centre d'information. De plus en plus, on y accueille des personnes qui ont déjà vu le matériel et la présentation audiovisuelle. On y fait sortir une expérience pratique de la lecture et qui contribue à des besoins précis. Le matériel et le mobilier permet changement de la disposition pour faciliter l'écriture et l'échange. Il y a un micro-ordinateur, un petit ordinateur de gestion à trois termi- naux, des terminaux raccordés à un mini- ordinateur et utilisés pour des services de auxiliaires.

Pour les employés du ministère de l'Évironnement, le bureau de travail est maintenant une réalité. Ils peuvent en faire l'expérience au 2e-de-l'avenue de l'Immeuble Vincent Massey, situé sur boulevard Saint-Joseph à Hull.

## DE LA THÉORIE À LA PRATIQUE

Voici le deuxième numéro du bulletin d'information sur le Programme de la  
Coopération internationale

Partenariat des exemplaires du premier bulletin,  
s'adresser à la :  
Direction de l'information  
Ministère des Communications  
300, rue Slater, 19<sup>e</sup> étage  
Immeuble Journal nord  
Ottawa (Ontario)  
K1A 0C8

Le présent bulletin comprend une liste de publications touchant à la bureautique et publicitaires sur le premier bureau électronique de l'administration fédérale. Dans le prochain numéro, nous ferons le point sur les essais en varié grandeur. Pour

## Programme de la bourse d'étude

# BUREAUTE. LA









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